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# The Evangelization of Japanese Christianity in Colonial Korea: The Current State of Affairs and Issues

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## 1. Problem

Modern Japanese (Protestant) Christianity has been deeply connected with Korea from the start of Christianity's introduction to that country. The political party Chosŏn Kaehwadang came to believe after they saw the modernized Meiji state that accepting the religion would help with Korea's own modernization. They contacted missionaries in Japan and became Christians themselves. Upon their return, some became politically active and instigated the Kapshin Chŏngbyŏn (Coup), while others invited missionaries to come in hopes it would aid in Korea's modernization. Tsuda Sen, who taught about both Christianity and new agricultural techniques, illustrates the relationship between Japanese Christianity and Korea in this early period (Kim 1998). In his discussion of Japan's annexation of Korea and contemporary evangelization efforts by Japan's Christian denominations, Han Sŏk-hŭi also notes as follows:

According to Yamamoto Hideteru's *History of the Japan Christian Church*, the JCC passed a resolution submitted by Uemura Masahisa at their 17th convention held in October 1903 calling for mission work to begin in Korea. Kiyama Kōjirō, a member of the standing committee, was dispatched to Korea that same month to make observations. The Congregationalist Church also passed a resolution at their 19th general assembly that October to dispatch observers for the purpose of beginning mission work in Korea. Miyagawa Tsuneteru was sent in November.

Together with Watase Tsuneyoshi, President of Keijō gakudō (academy), he and Kiyama agreed that the Congregationalists would focus on Keijō (present-day Seoul), while JCC would work north-to-south focusing on Pusan. The JCC dispatched

Akimoto Shigeo to Pusan in February 1904 to begin evangelizing. The Methodists sent Kihara Hokashichi to Keijō that April to oversee the work there, and the Congregationalists quickly followed suit by sending Kenmochi Shōgo to begin work that June. The groups all operated in Pyōng'yang, Taegu, and other areas. (Han 1988, p. 85)

With the exception of the Congregationalist Church, most Japanese Christian evangelization in Korea was done for Japanese living there. The Congregationalists, however, aimed to evangelize Koreans from the outset. That effort is the subject of the present work. Specifically, I will discuss the Congregationalists' evangelical activities and their Director, Ebina Danjō, in the context of the spread of Japanese Christianity in Korea.

The Congregationalist effort in Korea was unique not for the way in which it preached the gospel to save people, but rather for how it acquired the Korean Christian church, which had fallen on hard times administratively owing to the halt of mission funds from foreigners through donations from capitalists and secret funds from the Japanese Government-General (Kim 1998, p. 142).

Matsuo Takayoshi offers a critical take on how the Congregationalists worked in Korea. He writes:

The Government-General's aid was not limited to the aforementioned indirect assistance. As Kashiwagi Gien later made clear in "Kumiai kyōkai jihei-ron" [Abuses in the Era of the Congregationalist Church] (*Jōmō kyōkai geppō*, May 20, 1931), the Government-General made anonymous contributions of 6,000 yen per year from its secret funds (Kashiwagi says it was 8,000 yen in "Aete kumiai kyōkai no eidan o nozomu" [In Hopes of a Decisive Judgment on the Congregationalist Church], *Jōmō kyōkai geppō*, Nov. 15, 1919). Kashiwagi also speaks in the same article of Terauchi's zealous efforts to solicit funds. Reference may also be made to the wealthy men of Hyōgo, who commented, "Mr. Kashiwagi, Terauchi treated me in Keijō and was able to get money for evangelizing Koreans. Western Christians cannot make a go of it. (Matsuo 1968a, p. 9)

We can surmise from this that the Congregationalist Church's finances came in large part from donations. This led to their using the donations to acquire the Korean church, which was not financially independent. The Congregationalist Church's Korea drive was carried out by Watase, who was influenced by Ebina Danjō's thought. According to Matsuo, Watase outlined his view on the March First Movement in an article titled "Chōsen sōyū jiken to sono zengo saku" [The Korean Riots and Their Remedy] that appeared in *Kirisutokyō sekai* (April 10 and 17) and *Shinjin* (April). Watase wrote that the Movement was led by students and Ch'ōndogyo, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian ministers. "They do not understand the true (Christian) spirit of, 'turn the other cheek'" in the Korean Christian church. "They have nurtured Jewish forms and a narrow-minded patriotism." "American missionaries may also bear some responsibility for not having been able to firmly oppose this movement." Annexation did not come up as a source of the riots, nor Government-General Tyranny. Rather, annexation was the will of the Korean people, he wrote, and these events were proof that the Movement was limited to one segment of the populace (Matsuo 1968b, p. 51).

The Korea evangelization drive has also been criticized from an historical perspective. For example, Matsuo writes as follows:

As I understand it, Christianity, which preaches love thy neighbor and says all are equal before God, ought to be quite contradictory with colonial rule, which chains the feet of another people. The attitude of Christianity, which should have represented the conscience of modern Japan and particularly the Protestant sects who championed "liberty" and "progress" toward the reality of Japanese imperial rule in Korea and the independence movements there, is not just an important problem in Christianity's history in modern Japan, but an important issue to study for anyone interested in the history of Japanese imperialism and its opponents. (Matsuo 1968a, p. 1)

More than a few of Japan's Christian leaders were critical of the Congregationalists' efforts in Korea from the outset. Uemura Masahisa



described Korea's annexation as "something that was delivered from God" and "expressed a feeling of satisfaction" that Japan was "an entity that could exercise its own parental authority" ("Dai-Nippon no Chōsen" [Great Japan's Korea], *Fukuin shinpō*, Sep. 1, 1910). But he viewed the Congregationalist's absorptive, cooperative evangelization efforts negatively. The "question," he said, was whether "Japanese power means liberty, or viewing the weak as slaves." There must be thorough "discussion and criticism" aimed at producing a praiseworthy answer. (Matsuo 1968a, p. 5) Uchimura Kanzō also clearly distanced himself from the Congregationalists' evangelization policy, as Fujita Shōzō illustrates; "There were Christians who both repudiated evangelizing in Korea and rejected as evil in the fact of Korean annexation. None other than Uchimura Kanzō adopted a position whose points of reference differed fundamentally from the stances taken by each of the aforementioned Christians, leftists included" (Fujita 1967, p. 67). Uchimura published an article titled "Chōsen koku to Nihon koku" [Korea and Japan] in *Seisho no kenkyū* in December 1909, shortly before Korea's annexation. Uchimura said that an American missionary living in Seoul wrote in a letter to him that Korea was likely to become a Christian country before Japan. "I felt exceedingly happy and exceedingly sad all at once. In the end, I stilled my heart and gave thanks to my God," he confessed. What made him happy? It was that God "would bring and deliver the riches of the soul" to Korea in response to "worldly losses" that left it in "a most pitiable state without its land, its government, and its independence." On the other hand, that "Japan has acquired many things in recent decades" saddened him. Japan had taken Taiwan, Sakhalin (*Karafuto*), Manchuria "and de facto Korea, too. However, in acquiring these things Japan has lost much of its spirit. Its morale is weakening day by day, its morals are slipping day by day, and society is falling apart." (Matsuo 1968a, p. 6)

The Congregationalist evangelization policy had its internal critics as well. In his analysis of the debate between Watase and Kashiwagi, Inuma Jirō noted the clear contrast between Watase and Kashiwagi's evaluations of the March First Movement. Watase, after affirming the Japanese Government-General's harmonization policy, criticized the movement for producing opposition to Japan's annexation of Korea (Inuma 1973, p. 68). Kashiwagi, on the other hand, criticized Watase in his article, "Chōsen

jiken to senjin kirisutosha" [The Korean Incident and Korean Christians] as follows:

In this way, we have come to oppose Mr. Watase's Korean evangelization policy. In our eyes, he appears to be acting against missionaries in his evangelical work. At the very least, the Government-General and nonbelievers in Japan give money for Mr. Watase's work not because they are in accord with Christianity, but rather because his is not just the Christianity of foreign missionaries. The Government-General has tried to identify the source of the disturbances, saying Ch'öndogyo preachers incited ignorant people, or that they were instigated and abetted by American missionaries. Mr. Watase, too, has quickly sought to enlighten us about the truth of the riots. While he also argued simply that it was Ch'öndogyo and missionaries, at almost no point did he touch on failed Government General policies or misconduct by Japanese as possible true causes of the disturbances. For a religionist to transcendently not touch upon worldly affairs would be extraordinary. To direct an ironic pen toward the missionaries but be silent when it comes to the Government-General on matters that cannot be accepted tacitly out of human interest cannot but help to produce an expression of wonder. Looking closely at the missionaries' connection with the present events and what they ask people to acknowledge also leaves us with a distinctly odd feeling. Was Yuasa Jirō's argument against anonymous donations not farsighted? (Iinuma 1973, p. 77)

Though both Congregationalists and Japanese Christian leaders, Kashiwagi and Watase were of completely different minds on the March First movement and the evangelization drive. The important element that set them apart was Ebina, who supported Watase's arguments on the drive and defined it. Ebina's thought—the intellectual premises behind the Congregationalist Church's drive, such as his expansionist discourse on the "Yamato spirit" to be examined below, that grant it a special place in the

Japanese Christian effort in Korea—is an important theme of this research that requires elucidation.

## 2. History and Present State of Ebina Studies

Ebina studies have been centered to date on Tokyo and Kyoto. The focus in Tokyo is at the Japanese Protestant History Study Group created by Ozawa Saburō and his circle at the Fujimi-chō Church. This group has had regular meetings once a month since 1950, focused on lectures and roundtable discussions. We see from the speakers that it is an important center of research in the history of Japanese Christianity.<sup>1</sup> In addition to Ebina's children Ebina Kazuo and Ōshita Aya, Takahashi Masao, Ōuchi Saburō, Unuma Hiroko, and Yoshinare Akiko have all presented their research. Ōuchi later published an article (Ōuchi 1957) and laid out similar arguments in his *Nippon kirisutokyō shi* [The History of Japanese Christianity]. Yoshinare also published her research (Yoshinare 1982) in a work that is probably one of the most important studies of Ebina. Her research can be offered as the most representative of the studies on him at the Study Group.

The second core of Ebina studies is centered at Dōshisha University in Kyoto. It can be divided into two periods. The first period ran for several years immediately after the end of World War II and saw the publication of articles in *Kirisutokyō kenkyū* [A Study of Christianity] by Ariga Tetsutarō, Uoki Tadakazu, and Ōtsuka Setsuji by request from “Ebina lectures” at Dōshisha (see Ariga 1945, Uoki 1945, and Ōtsuka 1946).<sup>2</sup> These three researchers were Ebina's disciples (among his last), and made Ebina's theological ideas their object of inquiry. Ariga and Ōtsuka's articles sought to understand how Ebina's theological ideas fit in the history of European Christian thought (strictly, in doctrinal history). They offered affirmative, positive evaluations of Ebina's thought that does not function as critical research by considering temporal and historical circumstances. Uoki's work, which favorably assesses Ebina's attempts to create a Japanese-style Christianity in the context of Japanese Christian history does offer some critical perspectives, but it is not adequate as intellectual history research. In short, Ebina studies from this first period present a favorable view of Ebina by situating his theological ideas within European Christian

intellectual history. Completely missing are attempts to understand Ebina by seeing his relationship to actual events in modern Japanese history. Ariga especially works to tease out the unique characteristics of Ebina's theological approach that were rooted in his religious experience. His research must be lauded for how he sees Ebina's basic thought in the ideas of the "closeness of the father and son" and the "union of God and man," and how it provides the basic support for later studies on Ebina's theological thought. The second Kyoto period centered on the Christian Social Problems Research (CS Research Group) that began in 1955. This group focused researching Christianity's impact on social thought and social movements during Japan's modernization. Their research was published in their in-house magazine, *Kirisutokyō shakai mondai kenkyū* [The Study of Christianity and Social Problems], and also in article collections including *Nihon ni okeru kirisutokyō to shakai mondai* [Christianity and Social Problems in Japan] (1963), *Kumamoto band kenkyū* [Kumamoto Band Studies] (1965), and *Nihon no kindai to kirisutokyō* [Japan's Modernization and Christianity] (1973). The group's research on Ebina was varied and not limited to his theological ideas. Notable research from this group includes the work of Doi Akio, Takenaka Masao, and Imanaka Kanji, as well as Inuma (1973) and Kasahara Yoshimitsu (1974) (the latter pair's post-1974 work will be assessed below). Sekioka Kazushige's work stands as a more recent example of this strand of Kyoto research.

Ebina studies focused on his thought may be broken down as follows.

(1) Research limited to his theological ideas.

Much of the research on Ebina's thought falls into this category. It fits in approximately with what would be called theological research (systematic theology) and doctrinal history. For two reasons, however, it might be more appropriate in Ebina's case to call it Christian intellectual and theological history. First, given that the Enlightenment did away with dogma as church law in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, it seems doubtful as church historian Adolf von Harnack has shown that we can apply the concept of "doctrinal history" as a history of doctrines (dogma) (Tillich 1999).<sup>3</sup> Second, the view remains strong that there was as yet no distinct sense of "theology" in the Meiji period. In any event, examples of this type of Ebina

research include Ariga (1945), Ōtsuka (1945), Doi (1965), and Kumano (1968).<sup>4</sup> Takenaka Masao's "Ebina o traeru shiten—Ebina no shingaku shisō ni tsuite no ichi kōsatsu" [A Perspective for Grasping Ebina: A Consideration of Ebina's Theological Ideas] also falls into this category.

(2) Research on the relationship between theological ideas and its intellectual background.

An example of this Doi (1967), which elucidated the connections with Confucianism in Ebina's thought. Yoshinare (1982) offers a similar discussion.

(3) Research on the shift from theological to political thought.

Yoshinare (1982) is important here, and I will examine her work below. Hirai (1975) is also pertinent.<sup>5</sup>

This is hardly an exhaustive list of all the genres of postwar Ebina studies, but it is sufficient as an outline. We can see that numerous works address Ebina's thought from various specific perspectives, while only Yoshinare's work offers an all-encompassing take on the whole of his thought. The lag in this research is striking compared to that on his contemporaries Uchimura and Uemura, particularly on the matter of the availability of sources. There are complete collections or at least book collections available for Uchimura, Uemura, and Kozaki, but in contrast there is no thorough compilation of Ebina's works.

Looking more closely at the most important pieces of Ebina studies, I turn first to Kumano's work. In 1967, Kumano published his article, "Ebina Danjō no *Shisō no shingaku*" [Ebina Danjō's "Theology of Ideas"] in *Fukuin to sekai* (later collected; see Kumano 1968). Together with Ariga, this piece laid the foundation for Ebina research. Kumano sought to grasp the basic features of Ebina's theological thought from a "theology of ideas" perspective. As with Ariga, Kumano focused his analysis on Ebina's theological ideas, but his work marked a methodological advance. First, he approached Ebina's thought processes and intellectual framework by looking at his Confucian training and religious experience. Kumano consciously developed this method in his work, which Doi and Yoshinare picked up in their studies. Second, Kumano analyzed the relationship between Ebina's theological ideas with their historical circumstances. While Ariga situated Ebina's thought in the context of Christian intellectual

history, particularly European Christian intellectual history, Kumano cast his eye on the relationship between historical circumstance and thought and attempted to understand Ebina's thought based on that. This move was decisively important, and I will attempt to advance the two foregoing points methodologically in this work.

Kumano's conclusions may be summarized as follows.

(1) Kumano concludes from his analysis of Ebina's religious experience and Confucian education that the "way of piety" fostered and imbued his ideas (p. 152). We should note here that "Ebina's Confucian education, in contrast with Kozaki for example, can be seen as having maintained a closeness with 'Shinto' through and through." (p. 151)

Kasahara's and Sumiya's works are suggestive on this first point. Kasahara Yoshimitsu is a member of Dōshisha University's study group; his 1974 article, "Nihon-teki kirisutokyō hihan" [A Criticism of Japanese-Style Christianity], stands at the cutting edge of work on Japanese-style Christianity. In it, he points out that Ebina wrote in *Kirisutokyō jukkō* [Ten Lectures on Christianity] (1915) that one might think Christianity is incompatible with Japan since the latter has been a polytheistic country since ancient times while the former is monotheistic. However, Ebina went on, Nativist scholars since Kamo no Mabuchi and Motoori Norinaga have acknowledged *Amenominakanushi* as the one fundamental deity among the *Yaoyorozunokami* (the myriad gods). Since ancient times, Japan has also been a country of monarchical despotism under the emperor. Thus, Ebina argued, the two sets of thought are in concurrence.

In short, just as *Amenominakanushi* stands in authority above the *Yaoyorozunokami*, Jehovah alone is held to be superior to the *Yaoyorozunokami* of heaven. If one accepts *Amenominakanushi*'s superiority and worships it as a unique deity who governs the whole of creation, then it would not be unnatural for those ideas to reach a point where they would essentially be in accord with the Christian view of deities. If we were to produce a great reform in Japanese polytheism, and produce, as it were, a so-called "great monarchical restoration" (*ōsei ishin*) in the religious world, we could have Christianity and ancient Shinto

turn into the same religion in how they view god. (Ebina, as quoted in Kasahara 1974, p. 120)

Kasahara indicates that Ebina's Christian thought is radical even in the context of Japanese-style Christianity, saying it might best be called "an intricate mixture of Christianity and Shinto" (p. 120). Explaining its significance, he writes, "Japanese-style Christianity has been defined above as a joining of traditional Japanese thought with Christianity. The terms of that union were synthetic, eclectic, amalgamated, and so intimate that in religious historical terms it might best be called syncretic, but the main point is that this falls within the category of the discourse on synthesis. Naturally, the lack of detailed records on the logic of that synthesis is also appropriate. The degree of synthesis varies, but when we look at Japanese-style Christianity in its totality we naturally see elements that can be categorized as pertaining to this synthesis discourse." (p. 121)

Sumiya Mikio also regarded Ebina's Christianity as "Japanese-style Christianity" in his work (Sumiya 1961). Likewise, I have worked from the same understanding of Ebina as Kasahara and Sumiya in my own research (Kim 1996). My book comprises an introduction; a chapter on Ebina's life; chapters on his "Shinto-style" Christianity, discussions on war, and Korea evangelization efforts; and a conclusion. Starting from Kasahara's concept of Japanese-style Christianity, I discuss what I call "Shinto-style" Christianity and base my assessment on Ebina's words, cited below:

Based on Hirata (Atsutane)'s arguments, our so-called gods of heaven (*amatsukami*) are the same as China's so-called supreme deity Shangdi. He further concludes they are the same as that, which they worship in the countries of Spain, Portugal, Holland, and Africa that lie in all directions beyond India. Westerners have long been aware that their so-called God is the same as the Chinese' so-called supreme deity Shangdi. Since Japan's *amatsukami* is another name for China's Shangdi and the West's God is another name for China's Shangdi, our *amatsukami* and God are clearly the same deity. (Kim 1996, p. 79)



Ebina studied Hirata's view of the divine very closely and read it into, so to speak, European Christianity. This is Japanese-style Christianity, or to push it further, "Shinto-style" Christianity. Kumano does touch on the relationship between Japanese spirit and Ebina's theological ideas, saying "Japan's existing spiritual traditions were detected and Christian belief taken up as something indispensable for their development" (Kumano 1976, p. 154). Unfortunately, however, he does nothing more than point this out. We must certainly deal with this point thoroughly in our research.

(2) Kumano's second point is that Ebina's theological writings start with the premise of a single "idea," and develop in accordance with clear "forms of thought" and within an "intellectual framework." His "idea" is the Enlightenment idea that there is a reciprocal relationship between "self," "nation," and "the civilized world." Accordingly, Ebina's theological thought may be described as "a theology of ideas" (Kumano 1967, pp. 156–157). Setting aside the appropriateness of such a turn of phrase, understanding Ebina's theological ideas in the context of Meiji period conditions and ideas is extremely important.

(3) The problem is the following conclusion. "In Ebina's case, is it not that his receptiveness to the national spirit—inherited by Shinto and based on Japan's traditional ideational forms—came instead from the sphere of his emotions, and he attempted a Christian apologetics with that as his source material? We can sense that his beliefs were even more orthodox than his discourse, and that they were naive. However, it is believed that he earned the considerable dissatisfaction of many with the creation of his theological theories as a result of his excessive sensitivity to trends in contemporary thought combined with his extensive love of learning" (Kumano 1967, p. 164). Certainly, this conclusion applies to one aspect of Ebina's ideas, but it's hard to say that it completely grasps the other side of his thought, namely, inversion produced within it. That side is what is problematic about Ebina's thought, namely, the mechanism of the inversion through which he fundamentally "Shinto-izes" Christian ideas by reading Shinto elements into Christian thought.

Kumano's work was deeply important for subsequent Ebina research. Discussing its connections to the research of Doi, Yoshinare, and others would be deeply interesting, but out of concerns for space I will forego that discussion. Instead, I will next take up research that situates Ebina's



thought in its contemporary intellectual context of Christianity in Korea and Japan.

Kurata Masahiko has described the character of Korean Christianity at the time of Ebina's evangelize effort as follows:

Unique features of the faith of American missionaries (i.e., missionaries who evangelized in Korea: author's note) in this early period were their Puritanical Pietism—with their strict adherence to a day of rest and distaste for alcohol and tobacco—and their conservative traditionalist beliefs that took the Bible literally.

Korean missionary Brown argued at the time that they believed the Second Advent of Jesus to be the core truth. The revival movement served as the model for how churches developed in America, where churches were formed based on a denominational structure based on the principle of the separation of church and state. (Kurata 1991, p. 73)

Korean Christians at the time tended toward eschatology under the influence of the missionaries, putting their thinking at odds with Ebina's fundamental idea of Japanese expansionism. I have quoted Ebina as follows on his post-annexation efforts to nurture a Japanese spirit among Koreans and Japanize them:

It is the growth of the Yamato soul (*tamashii*). It started with a small seed. Or rather, a seed among the people who live in Emperor Jinmu's place, or those places attached to Emperor Jinmu. This Yamato soul will grow larger the more it is nurtured and our territory expands. The soul of Yamato used to be a small one and a pure one, but that small soul, that soul of Yamato, that soul of the five Yamato provinces is steadily spreading now. It is growing bigger. That spirit (*seishin*) grew, spreading first to the northeast and then onto Hokkaido. Now it is going to the Kurile Islands and to *Karafuto* (Sakhalin), and it is spreading in the south all the way from the Ryūkyūs toward to Taiwan. And it

will spread in the west from Korea to Manchuria. (Kim 1996, p. 167)

Discussing Ebina's discourse on the Yamato spirit, Yoshinare wrote as follows: "The phenomenon of Christian transcendentalism being weakened in Ebina can be said to be a result of divorcing Christianity from Western civilization and uniting it with Japanese traditional religion" (Yoshinare 1982, p. 8). Furthermore, as I have argued, "by looking for roots of a 'national spirit' as the true nature of Japan in 'logos,' we can see that Ebina completely overlooked the internal norms that regulate a nation's behavior abroad. This provided a foundation for Japanese imperial expansion based on 'logos'" (Kim 1996, pp. 194–195). Based on his discussion of Confucianism's relationship to Ebina's theological ideas, Doi concludes, "it is something that was noticeable in discouraging the traditional Confucian consciousness that held the Confucian Heaven to be another name for the Christian deity. However, as noted earlier this new religious consciousness did not dissolve the master-servant moral relationship with the deity, but rather was something that absorbed and subsumed it into itself and perfected it" (Doi 1967, p. 31). "By his logic, the transcendental view of god will be absorbed and subsumed into a ubiquitous view, and therefore should evolve and advance in that direction" (*ibid.*, p. 32).

Yoshinare and Doi clearly engage with the intellectual problems Ebina raises, but have they assessed and critiqued him adequately? The qualifications scattered throughout their work, such as "filled with danger," "arouses suspicion," and "we can call this one result" lead one to believe that—as can generally be said about all Ebina studies to date—while they point out the problems raised by Ebina, their critiques are incomplete. They for the most part do not elucidate how Ebina's interpretation of Shinto created a "Shinto-style" Christianity, and do not clearly grasp how "Shinto-style" Christianity inverted, so to speak, Ebina's intentions. These points must be clarified in future research based on the achievements of Ebina studies represented by Kumano, Doi, and Yoshinare.

Drawing from his religious experience and Confucian education, we must clarify how he created "Shinto-style" Christianity and investigate the connections between the consequences of that and the issues of his times.

This will make it possible to understand concretely the problems in Ebina's ideas that have yet to be grasped in research thus far.

The goal in my work has been to advance research on Ebina by focusing on his "Shinto-style" Christianity. I must draw attention here to the similar pattern in how Japanese Christianity received, or "indigenized," Shinto-style Christianity. Sorting out what the relationship was between Christian ideas on the one hand and both traditional Japanese thought and religion and the state on the other very quickly became an issue for Ebina's peers among the Japanese Christian leadership, including Kozaki Hiromichi, Uchimura Kanzō, and Uemura Masahisa. Various methods were applied to determine this relationship, but the research to date on Japanese Christian history has discussed them only as a problem of "indigenizing" the religion. Takeda Kiyoko defines "indigenization" as meaning "accepting a single religion or set of ideas in one country or cultural sphere and rooting it in the souls and spirits of the people" (Takeda 1967, p. 7).<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, our problem is to make clear how Ebina's attempt to indigenize Christianity was performed by the unique method of creating a "Shinto-style" Christianity. Ebina can be said to present an "embedded" pattern of indigenization in contrast to Uchimura's confrontational pattern. However, while much research has been done in the postwar period in Japanese Christian history that looks at people, such as Uchimura Kanzō, Uemura Masahisa, and Kashiwagi Gien whose Christian beliefs contrasted with the Meiji state in various ways, as noted above almost no research has comprehensively addressed Ebina's thought as a whole. Understandably, with its nationalistic, Japanese chauvinistic, and Shinto-style features, Ebina's Christian thought has been held in low esteem in the postwar period. Postwar research on Japanese Christian history has been conducted with justifiable motivations of reflecting on prewar Japanese Christianity, which had cooperated with Shōwa fascism, and criticizing Japanese-style and Shinto-style Christianity in the vein of Ebina.

Where, then, can we find meaning in considering Ebina's thought today? That meaning comes from the fact that the problems in Ebina's Shinto-style Christianity are not just accidental or personal matters, but rather are related to the true nature of issues that cannot be escaped with an

indigenized Christianity. In short, with indigenization comes the danger that Christianity will be fundamentally submerged under traditional religion and culture and lose its character. Any sincere and reasonable attempt to indigenize Christianity to Japan or turn it into a Japanese tradition contained the possibility of one's original intention being inverted. The problem is not limited to Japan's Meiji period; it remains current today and what's more has emerged repeatedly throughout the history of Christianity.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, to define Ebina's thought as Shinto-style Christianity and clarify that problematic holds important implications for understanding the danger of inversion that comes with indigenization. Ebina's thought offers a prototype for this inversion and is of great importance for its historical impact.

### 3. Issues in Ebina Studies

I will next attempt to address some of the issues in present-day Ebina studies through my own research and the critical response to it. In contrast with Kasahara and Sumiya's Japanese-style Christianity and Shinto-style Christianity, I understand Ebina's Christianity as "Shinto-style" Christianity. To say "Japanese-style" obscures the way Christianity is on par with Shinto in Ebina, and also calls for defining the connections to Buddhism and Confucianism. Also Ebina's interpretation of Shinto is more of a way to understand the Japanese spirit in a manner particular to Ebina rather than something to be interpreted in a scholarly or proper way, and so should be talked of by using "Shinto-style" in quotes.

Among my critics is Sekioka Kazushige, who has written as follows:

This is the first serious Ebina study in sixteen years. Kim looks at Ebina from an intellectual history perspective in the same vein as Yoshinare. The points he critiques in Ebina's thought are also the same. However, while Yoshinare focused on Ebina's comments on current events (political thought) and critically analyzed Ebina based on that, Kim is quite different in that he takes up and critiques Ebina's religious thought. (Sekioka 1999, p. 54)

Sekioka summarizes my argument as follows:

Kim argues that the formation of Ebina's 'Shinto-style' Christianity was connected to his Confucian education and developed from there. The uneven presence of god in Christian theology lent this support. Kim then argues that, through his emphasis on the monotheistic character of Confucianism's Shangdi and such Shinto deities as *Amaterasu ōmikami*, *Amatsukami*, and *Amenominakanushi kami* in his articles on 'Shintō no shūkyō-teki seishin' [Shinto's Religious Spirit] and 'Nihon shūkyō no sūsei' [Trends in Japanese Religion], Ebina was preaching that they were the same as the Christian God Jehovah. Ultimately, Kim argues, Ebina treated the Christian God and the Shinto deities as 'different names for the same thing' and blended them together. (Sekioka 1999, p. 55)

The nucleus of Kim's 'Shintō-teki kirisutokyō' [Shinto-style Christianity] argument lies in (1) the treatment of the Christian God as on par with the Shinto deities, (2) the deification of the emperor, and (3) the emphasis on the supremacy of the emperor state (nationalism). (Sekioka 1999, p. 56)

Sekioka next addresses each of these points with excerpts from Ebina.

Monotheism is the plain truth emphasized by Christianity. Even though the emphasis on monotheism may seem simple, we must not forget that Japan has been a polytheistic country until today. We have not yet shaken off such religious elements as shrine worship. We must reject this polytheism on the one hand, while establishing monotheism at the same time. (*Shinjin*, 19: 7, p. 15)

Ebina held Hirata Atsutane in high regard mainly because Hirata had been influenced by Christianity and interpreted Shinto's deities monotheistically, not for his stance that the *Yaoyorozunokami* were the same as the unique Christian God.

Secondly, Kim argues that Ebina regarded the emperor and God as the same, but while Ebina, like Uchimura Kanzō and others, respected the emperor, he did not regard the two as the same. The two statements below make this clear.

Christians believe in a heavenly god. That being so, when there are differences in the characteristics between the decrees of our Emperor and the will of the God of heaven, that is, the Heavenly Father, depending on the circumstances the Christian will certainly subordinate himself to orders of the Heavenly Father. These misgivings have remained misunderstood to this day. The question we must settle first is to clearly establish what we call the deity we worship. God certainly is a true, good, and beautiful deity. He is a God that practices true reason. Justice and righteousness are the Christian God. The Emperor likewise believes in abiding by this truth. (*Kaitakusha*, 10: 2, p. 39)

The Christian God is above the multitudes, penetrates the multitudes, and is the spirit that resides in the multitudes. The subjects must rely on him, the nation must rely on him, the Emperor must rely on him. (*Shinjin*, 17: 12, p. 20)

Furthermore, Ebina wrote as follows on the limits of Shinto based on ethnic and other nationalism, and on the necessity of tearing it down.

Filial piety has deep bonds to Shinto that cannot be severed. It would be a major achievement for the Japanese people if the spiritual world could be saved from destruction by Japan's unique Shinto without Buddhism or Christianity. Are we not both Japanese and people of the world at the same time? Of the world and of the universe? Of the world made manifest, and of the world of the dead? No matter how one reconsiders and reexamines Japanese Shinto, since we must categorize it as a folk religion it should not be the religion of a worldly Japan. (*Shinjin*, 12: 1, pp. 73–74)

Ebina died in 1937. Four years before, he lectured that the “new Japanese spirit” he emphasized was a national spirit that harbored an international spirit within.

I am confident that this definite and condense spirit is not related to the Japanese spirit. Of course, there are those who understand this differently and argue that the Japanese spirit possesses a uniqueness and idiosyncrasy unrelated to other spirits in the world. There are also Japanese who have recently become tremendously impressed by and interested in the Hitler movement that has swept Germany, but on the other hand there are also people who oppose it. (*Nihon seishin no honshitsu to kirisutokyō* [The Essence of the Japanese Spirit and Christianity], p. 5.) (Sekioka 1999, p. 56)

I would like to now respond to Sekioka’s criticisms of my work as outlined above.

Touching first on Ebina’s treatment of the Christian and Shinto deities as one and the same, Sekioka has cited writings in which Ebina distinguishes between monotheism and polytheism. However, my indicating that the Christian and Shinto deities are different names for the same being in Ebina is premised by his argument presented earlier that there is a monotheistic tendency among the *Yaoyorozunokami*. I am not simply arguing “monotheism = polytheism.” Ebina’s argument is probably clear from his texts cited elsewhere in the present article (p. 7).

Second, regarding the deification of the Emperor (the merging of the Emperor and God), this is not an argument I make in my work. I certainly speak repeatedly of how the Christian God was identified with the Shinto deities (the Gods of Heaven and so on), but that is a separate issue from saying “the Emperor = God.” Discussion is needed on whether Ebina thought “the Emperor = God,” but this is not the place for it. Further, of the two Ebina articles Sekioka cites (*Kaitakusha*, 10: 2, p. 39; *Shinjin* 17: 12, p. 20), one should note that the intention of Ebina’s *Shinjin* piece was to respond to criticisms of Christianity based on an “infantile conception of



deities” that saw Christian belief (acting in accordance with god’s dictates) as antagonistic to patriotism (revering the wishes of the court and the myriad deities). In short, Ebina argued that Christianity and State Shinto were in agreement.

Finally, it must be pointed out that Ebina’s arguments about nationalism are based on monotheistic interpretation of the idea of Shinto (Japanese spirit). The idea of a “new Japanese spirit” harboring an international spirit is based on Ebina’s discourse regarding the “expansion of the Yamato spirit” cited earlier. What is that discourse if not nationalism?

The foregoing is my response to Sekioka’s criticisms, but still, the basic problem remains of assessing Ebina in the context of Japan’s post-Meiji period modernization, foreign expansionism, and the Korean evangelization drive that was conducted against that background. A proper understanding of Ebina cannot be achieved without it. Discussing Sekioka’s criticisms of my book, Unoda Shōya, Professor at Kobe University, notes:

Kim writes that Ebina’s Christian ‘reading’ of Shinto resulted in an ‘inversion’ that Shinto-ized Christianity. Kim’s work aims to ‘show that this inevitable result can clearly be seen in a Korea evangelization drive that intellectually complemented Japan’s invasion of Korea.’ As Sekioka also points out, throughout his life Ebina held onto a belief in a Christian god that was above the nation, people, and the emperor; Kim’s argument that Ebina deviated from that is difficult to support. However, as I have also argued here, even if we say that Ebina clung to his belief in a god superior to the nation, the problem remains of what to think about whether he just did not develop a critical perspective on Imperial Japan’s overseas expansion from that standpoint, or if he saw that expansion as the fulfillment by god of a ‘2,600-year old national mission.’ With my interest in assessing Ebina from the perspective of imperial consciousness, this question is the most important one that needs to be addressed. Sekioka, who has



done the most Ebina studies in recent years, touches on this issue in only a few places. The most powerful answer to this question that I have seen to date is Doi's interpretation, which notes critically that Ebina 'was unable to escape Confucian modes of thought in his interpretation of Christian doctrine.' I have learned much from this, but I would like to consider this problem while linking it more closely to the historical context. Needless to say, the present work represents one such attempt. (Unoda 2002, p. 297)

## Conclusion

Watase Tsuneyoshi, Ebina's main intellectual disciple and the lead minister of the Korea evangelization drive, argued in his *Nihon shingaku teishō* [An Exposition on Japanese Theology] that the *Kojiki* and the Old Testament are in accord on certain points. The work was politically significant, in that it made it possible for Christians to cooperate with a war effort aimed at creating an imperial nation. Also, Korean Christianity was going through the first stages of evangelization, and many Korean Christians would hold Japanese-style Christian beliefs propagated by the Japanese Congregationalist Church and cooperate with the Japanese Government-General. Most of those friendly to Japan were members of the Japanese Congregationalist Church and met at Congregationalist facilities. We can perhaps compare the situation to that of Germany. With its heritage as the former national church, the German Protestant Church was strongly linked to national traditions. Many Protestant ministers, theologians and believers distrusted the Weimar Republic, with its liberal constitutional structure patterned on Western European democracy. For that reason, it would seem almost natural that the entry onto the stage of a Nazi regime preaching a union of "the folk" and "the church" was uniformly welcomed. But on the other hand, though small in number a movement also arose that saw through the Nazi's policies and opposed their anti-Christian character contrast with the "German Christians" who supported the Nazi regime. When the Old Prussian Union with Ludwig Müller in the vanguard introduced the "Aryan Paragraph" to Canon Law with the goal of keeping Jews out of the Church, Martin Niemöller organized a Pastors' Emergency

League that saw it as an infringement on the Church's order and confession of faith. On January 4, 1934, 139 representatives from eighteen churches gathered in Barmen and held the Confessing Synod of the German Evangelical Church. There, they proclaimed the Synod to be Germany's only legitimate church rooted solely in the Bible and the confession of faith, and issued the Barmen Declaration. Though they were unable to check the Nazis from carrying out their policies, the anti-Nazi struggle in Germany symbolized by the formation of the Confessing Church centered on Niemöller, Karl Barth, and others, and the Barmen Declaration is of great historical significance (Kim 1996, p. 98).

We find no movement in Japanese Christianity from the Meiji to the Shōwa period opposing the church's turn to nationalism and cooperation with the war effort that can compare to the German church's struggle. When the movement to pay respects at shrines unfolded in the wake of the Manchurian Incident, Korean members of the Japanese Congregationalist Church agitated for people to visit shrines. More than 90 percent of the Christians in Korea—these were Koreans, of course—at the time visited shrines. Certainly, in the postwar period there has been reflection as seen in confessions about war responsibility on the part of Japanese Christian groups about the way the church behaved before and during World War II. However, as can be seen in the insufficiently critical assessments of the thought of Ebina Danjō that impelled the Congregationalist Church's Korean evangelization policy, it must be said that the amount of reflection on Japanese Christianity after the post-Meiji period is as yet inadequate. Herein lies part of the meaning in conducting studies on Ebina today.

## NOTES

- 1) We find the names of numerous leading scholars among the main lecturers, including Ozawa Saburō, Kudō Ei'ichi, Sumiya Mikio, Ōuchi Saburō, Takeda Seiko, Sugii Mutsurō, Ogawa Keiji, and Doi Akio. Please see Nihon puotesutanto shi kenkyūkai ed., *Nihon puotesutanto-shi no shomondai* [Problems in the History of Japanese Protestantism], 1983, pp. 346–368.

- 2) Ariga Tetsutarō, “Ebina Danjō to Girisha shingaku—Rekishiteki shingaku shisō no kenkyū” [Ebina Danjō and Greek Theology: A Study in Historical Theological Thought], *Kirisutokyō kenkyū*, 21: 4, 1945; Uoki Tadakazu, “Ebina-sensei to Nihon kirisutokyō shingaku” [Professor Ebina and Japanese Christian Theology], *ibid.*; and Ōtsuka Setsuji, “Ebina-sensei to shokuzai ron” [Professor Ebina and Atonement], *Kirisutokyō kenkyū*, 22: 1, 1946.
- 3) See Paul Tillich, “Kirisutokyō shisōshi I” [A History of Christian Thought, vol. 1] in *Tirihhi chosakushū bessatsu dai 2-kan* [Collected Works of Tillich, supplemental vol. 2], Hakusuisha, 1999.
- 4) Ishihara defines the Meiji and first half of the Taishō periods as “an age as yet without theology” (Ishihara 1967). Kumano argues that while there is no mistaking Ebina’s stance as rooted in theological ideas, it lacks the sources one would expect of a “theology.” He describes Ebina’s stance as “a theology of ideas” as it develops a theological discussion premised between a clear “formation of ideas” and “framework of thought” (Kumano 1968). Of course, we certainly cannot say that these discussions are effective or persuasive for in some way defining the concepts of “theology,” “doctrine,” or “doctrinal history,” but in this work I would like to take a stand on the terms “theological ideas” and “Christian thought.”
- 5) Hirai Ryōichi, “Ebina Danjō ni okeru kokka mondai” [The Problem of Nation in Ebina Danjō], *Kenkyū kiyō*, Kobe Kaisei (Stella Maris) College, no. 14, 1975.
- 6) Takeda Kiyoko. *Dochaku to haikyō* [The Indigenous and Apostasy], Shinkyō Shuppansha, 1967, p. 7.
- 7) Issues of the same sort arose when Christianity was adopted in the Greek and Roman cultural spheres. In each case, Christianity developed an indigenized form with its own unique characteristics.

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## Summary

### The Evangelization of Japanese Christianity in Colonial Korea The Current State of Affairs and Issues

*Kaehwadang* of the late Chosŏn period welcomed Protestant Christianity after they found, or believed they had found, during their visit to Japan, that the Western religion had brought about the remarkable development by which Japan transformed itself into a modern state. One can safely conclude, then, that Protestant Christianity was introduced to Korea via Japan.

The 1910 Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty led to a flow of Japanese Christian missions to Korea, which competed fiercely against each other in order to expand their influence in the annexed land. The first Japanese Christian mission in Korea began its activities in Pusan in 1904, to be followed by the missions sent by the Japanese Methodist Church and the Japanese Congregational Church, with the latter initiating mission activities in Seoul. The mission activities of the first Japanese Christians in Korea were conducted mostly for the benefit of Japanese expatriates in Korea, but those conducted by the Japanese Congregational Church were focused on Korean people.

This thesis deals with the missionary activities of Japanese Christian churches in Korea during the colonial period, and those of the Japanese Congregational Church, which was led by Ebina Danjō, in particular.

Christianity, as it is widely known and accepted, is a system of beliefs and practices based on the love of Christ towards all people on earth, but for Japanese Christians it was a religion that could be exploited as a means to strengthen the national ideology based on their traditional emperor system. That is why the Japanese Christian churches of the period were condemned as heretical by traditional Christians in the West.

A good deal of research was conducted on the characteristics of Japanese Christianity in the early 20th century. Experts discovered, for instance, that the belief of Ebina Danjō, unlike Uchimura Kanzō and Uemura Masahisa, successfully linked Christian beliefs with traditional Japanese ideology, eventually creating a syncretic form of Shinto-based

Christianity in which the *Amaterasu ōmikami* was regarded as a major subject of worship.

The influence of Japanese Christianity established by powerful Japanese Christian leaders, such as Ebina Danjō, led Korean Christians to readily worship the heathen spirits enshrined in the Japanese Shinto shrines. A few Korean Christians, however, fiercely opposed the worship of the Japanese ancestral spirits, risking imprisonment and even loss of life.

The ideological conflict typified by the Christians who accepted the Japanese Shinto tradition and those who opposed it continues in Korea even today. As such, this thesis is focused on the early history of the Protestant Christianity in Korea.